

Growing Home: The Lake Mary Story

By Shelley Ouellette

In 2007, Lake Mary was ranked by *Money* magazine as the top city in Florida and fourth best city in the nation to live and work. Why? It is this very question the 60-minute documentary "Growing Home: The Lake Mary Story" intends to answer. Designed to educate and connect the community, document Lake Mary's history for current and future generations, and communicate a vision for the city's future, "Growing Home" will serve as a vehicle for community pride and involvement for residents.

With an intended completion date of fall 2009, The Crawford Group, a multimedia production house located in Lake Mary, in partnership with the Lake Mary Historical Society, will capture, on film, the rich history of our charming community.

The project, which has been endorsed by Lake Mary Mayor David Mealor and City Manager John Litton, will be funded by contributions from the local community. During a production fund-raiser on February 12, invited guests viewed a brief trailer of the movie, which producers say will celebrate Lake Mary's past, present, and future.

"Lake Mary residents will have the opportunity to participate in this documentary in many ways through contributions, sponsorships, and donations of their time and talents," says Chad Crawford, founder and principal producer of The Crawford Group, who intends to recreate past Lake Mary events in reenactments featuring local residents.

Businesses, residents, and organizations interested in supporting the documentary's production can make tax-deductible



Gleason Grocery, Lake Mary



donations to the Lake Mary Historical Society, or contribute via one of several sponsorship packages, which start at \$1,000. Sponsors will receive credits at the beginning and end of the movie, copies of the DVD, and recognition in promotional materials.

The completed documentary DVD will be sold in the Lake Mary Historical Museum, mailed to an estimated 5,000 Lake Mary households, included in residential and corporate Lake

Mary welcome kits, and broadcast on PBS, Seminole Government TV (SGTV) and Orange TV.

To view the trailer for "Growing Home: The Lake Mary Story," visit www.lakemarylifemagazine.com. For more information about the documentary and sponsorship opportunities, call 407-322-8888.

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Test your knowledge of Lake Mary history

Q. Built in 1885, what was located on the present City Hall site?

A. A school, which cost \$449 and closed in 1920. It replaced the city's first school, which was a log cabin.

Q. In the 1920s, a dance casino (which meant summer house or pavilion) and bathhouse were built over the clear water of which Lake Mary lake?

A. Crystal Lake. The facility had both low and high diving boards and rowboat rentals were available. A bathing beauty contest held in 1922 drew more than 3,000 spectators. In 1924, Seminole County teachers held one of their meetings

in the casino. The Lake Mary Orchestra often played there.

Q. The land at the Smith-Ramsey House (located at Crystal Lake and Fifth Street) is part of a homestead granted to Robert West by which U.S. president?

A. President Benjamin Harrison in June 1891.

Q. The two-story Emerson House was built in the mid-1920s by Charles Sibley and Charles Emerson. Emerson's grandson was an astronaut. What is his name?

A. The first astronaut in space – Alan Shepard.